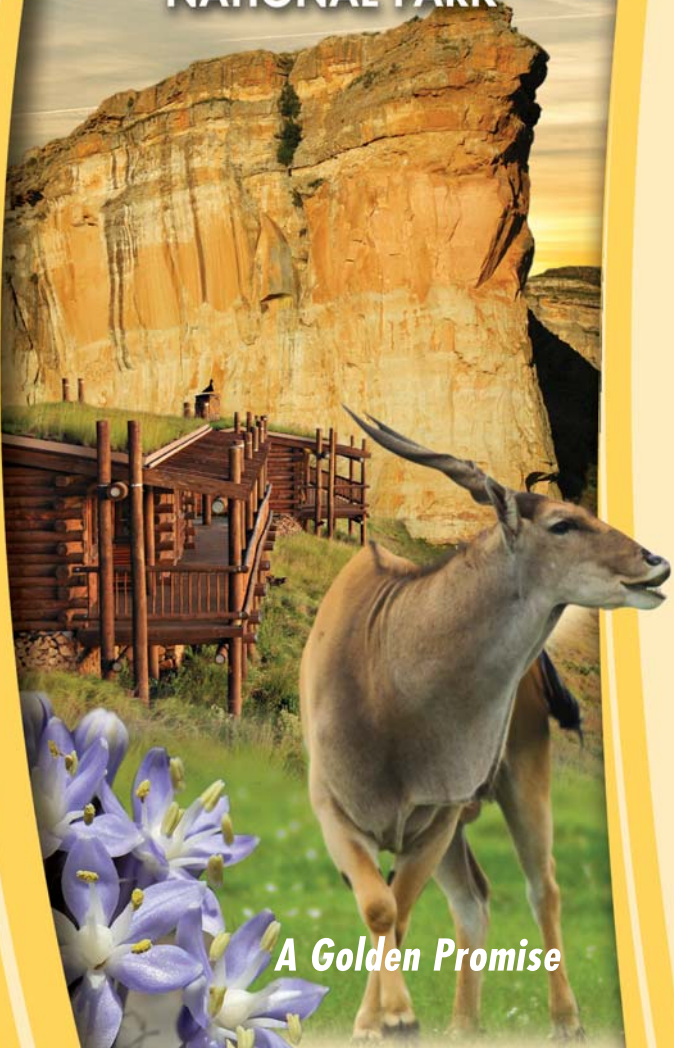




South African
NATIONAL PARKS

GOLDEN GATE HIGHLANDS NATIONAL PARK



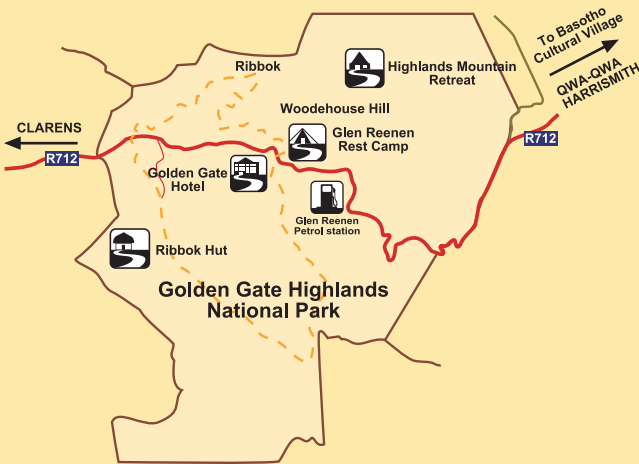
A Golden Promise

YOUR NATURAL HERITAGE



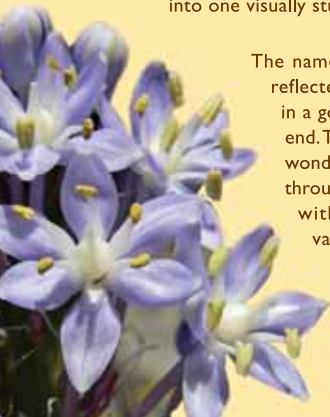
Golden Gate Highlands National Park

“A Golden Promise”



Truly a magnificent sight in gorgeous natural surroundings, Golden Gate Highlands National Park is an example of the spectacular scenery to be found in this part of the North-Eastern Free State. Dramatic sandstone cliffs, a fine selection of wildlife, a diverse range of plants, spectacular spots for birding ... everything rolled into one visually stunning national park.

The name “Golden Gate” stems from the sun’s rays reflected on the gigantic sandstone rocks, resulting in a golden glow which is visible for kilometers on end. These sandstone cliffs, moulded in a variety of wonderfully stunning shapes and forms, are located throughout the park and have become synonymous with this area. They are complemented by vast open grassland plains and the occasional speckles of colourful and blooming flowers like red-hot poker, lilies and watsonias. A picturesque setting tucked in between the mountains, Golden Gate offers a secluded getaway in paradise.

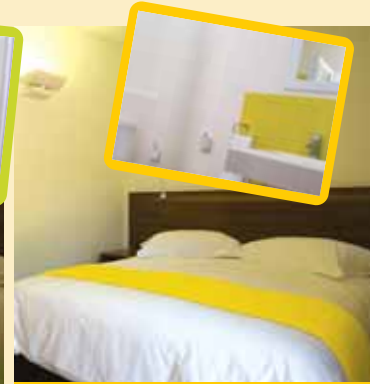


Golden Gate Highlands Hotel

With new luxurious state of the art facilities, Golden Gate Hotel now has a classy and modern decorating theme, ‘African seasons’, visible throughout the hotel and complements the natural surrounds of the park. Bright yellow illustrates the warm African summer sun, while white and dusty blue depicts winter. Exciting greens enhance the splendour of the spring rooms, and that exclusive Eastern Free State autumn is visible in the warm orange, earth brown and rich red of the autumn rooms’ décor.



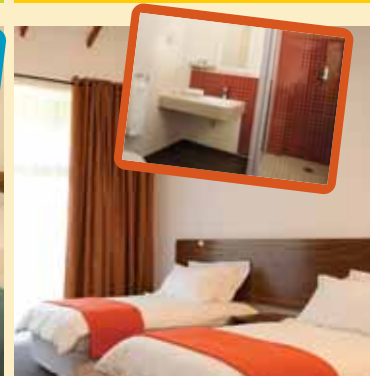
spring



summer



winter



autumn



Glen Reenen Rest Camp



honeymoon room

Now with 54 luxurious rooms, with three-quarters comprising of showers and bathtubs for the rest. Visitors will be able to gaze out their windows and appreciate the remarkable views of the surrounding mountains. The new hotel will also be fully compliant regarding accessibility for the mobility-impaired. The brand new honeymoon room will ensure that newlyweds spend their first night together in style, with dark chocolate and heart red as the designing colours, all decorated in an open plan to enhance feelings of intimacy and cosiness. A Jacuzzi bath and shower big enough for two complete this perfect picture.



A cocktail and coffee bar lounge enhances the top floor, while the lowest floor has a sport bar with an upbeat décor. The middle floor's restaurant allows for sophisticated spaciousness and can seat up to 300 guests who can enjoy the view of the surrounding mountains.

The latest state of the art conferencing equipment fills the 5 different conference spaces, with the largest one big enough for 300 delegates. The 34 adjacent self-catering chalets also underwent a minor upgrade, ensuring that guests neighbouring the hotel also enjoy their getaway in brand new style.



Rondavels

Choose your stay from rondavels, longdavels and family cottages. These options have a variety of single beds, double beds and stack beds to ensure your break is restful and calm. The rooms can take 2 to 6 people, depending on accommodation capacity, with family cottages comprising 1 to 3 bedrooms.



Camping Sites

For nature lovers who prefer to get a bit closer to the natural environment, caravan and camping sites are also on the list. Barbecue, scullery and ablution facilities guarantee a comfortable stay, complete with power points in some of the camp sites. A maximum of 6 persons, 1 caravan/tent and 1 vehicle or 1 auto villa is allowed per site.



Highlands Mountain Retreat



Cabins

Guests looking for a more higher up resting spot (literally) will find Highlands Mountain Retreat ideal. These excellent wooden log cabins, 2200 m above sea level, ensures visitors a striking view of the surrounding Malutis, one that can not be matched from any of the other accommodation options. Calmness, peaceful, isolated ... exactly what you'll be getting from these 8 perfect-for-winter spacious log cabins, seeing as they were designed to retain warmth during the chilly season, but also allow coolness during the summer months.



Guests can enjoy the fully equipped kitchens, roomy bathrooms and exquisite fireplaces to ensure a memorable and perfect break.



Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp



Rondavels

Be transported back in time when you visit the Basotho Cultural Village Rest Camp, which mirrors an 18th century Basotho village. An amazing architectural sight with stunning settings and decorations that will colour a soothing and relaxing backdrop for the visitor.

Guests can rest assured that the self-catering accommodation will be nothing short of comfortable and cosy. The natural surroundings serve to only enhance this picturesque little setting in the park, where safe game viewing can be happily enjoyed without the effort of embarking on an actual game drive.



Guests can choose between 2- and 4-sleeper rondavels:

Rondavel (4-sleeper)

- 1 bedroom with double bed
- 2 bunk beds
- 2 bathrooms, each with w/c and shower
- Communal braai lapa
- Kitchen
- Veranda with Weber braai

Rondavel (2-sleeper)

- 1 bedroom with double bed
- W/c (flushing toilet) and shower
- Communal braai lapa
- Kitchen
- Veranda with Weber braai

To enhance the social cosiness, braai facilities are shared amongst families in the camp, but each chalet also has a private weber braai.



Noord-brabant Farmhouse



Located 6 km from Glen Reenen Rest Camp, this rustic little farmhouse provides a comfortable setting for guests that comes complete with kitchen and bathroom facilities, 1 double bed, 1 sleeper couch and 3 single beds. It gives the visitor a "prehistoric" feeling and that eastern Free State awe while they're relaxing in the surrounding environment.

A lounge/dining room with a fireplace ensures that visitors staying over during the winter will have nothing but warm and cosy nights.

Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre



This well maintained centre, has been offering professional and outstanding educational programmes for over 20 years, includes a large hall with kitchen and accommodation for 92 people.

The stunning natural surroundings of the mighty peaks of Ribbokkop and Snow Hills ensure a charming stay, with the added bonus of ancient rock art just a few minutes' walk away. This is the ideal spot for youth groups, as they can learn about the history and secrets of the neighbouring environment while experiencing it first hand.

Facilities



- Enjoy the hotel's cosy atmospheric pub with log fire.
- Appreciate the environment in true form by picnicking and barbecuing at Glen Reenen's picnic site.
- Stock up at the Brandwag curio shop, delight in the restaurant's treats and unwind at the coffee shop and ladies' bar.
- Make use of Glen Reenen's general dealer and filling station to ensure a longer stay.
- Cool off in the natural pool at Glen Reenen.

* Please note: Conference, wedding and other functions' catering enquiries can be made directly to the hotel on +27 (0)58 255 0012

5 Wildlife to Seek

1. Bearded Vulture
2. Bald Ibis
3. Black Wildebeest
4. Eland
5. Oribi





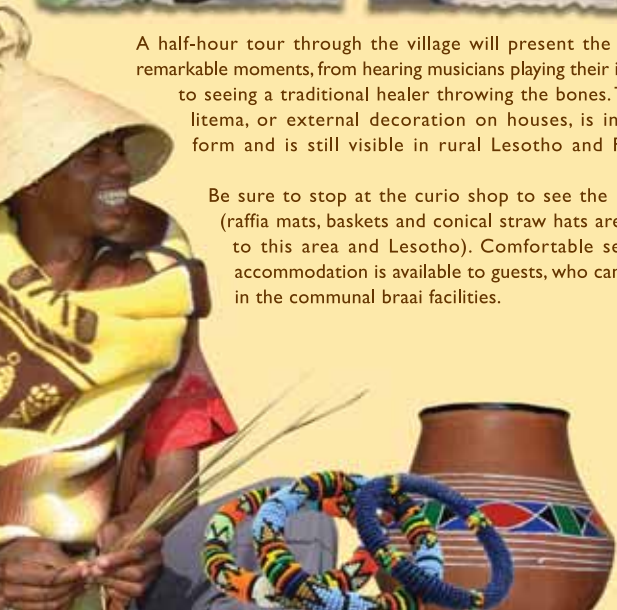
Basotho Cultural Village

Only 20 km east of Golden Gate lies the Basotho Cultural Village, a true gem of this northern national park. Here you can catch a glimpse of the traditional lives of the Basotho people, who have lived in this area for centuries and have a close affinity to the tribes living just across the border in Lesotho. The beautiful and colourfully decorated Basotho huts, along with the people in traditional dress, is set to amaze visitors, who will even have an opportunity to meet the village chief and sample the traditional beer.



A half-hour tour through the village will present the guest with remarkable moments, from hearing musicians playing their instruments to seeing a traditional healer throwing the bones. The unique litema, or external decoration on houses, is in its truest form and is still visible in rural Lesotho and Free State.

Be sure to stop at the curio shop to see the local crafts (raffia mats, baskets and conical straw hats are all unique to this area and Lesotho). Comfortable self-catering accommodation is available to guests, who can also relish in the communal braai facilities.



Activities



Abseiling



Canoeing

Guided
Bush Walk

Hiking

Horse
RidingNatural
Rock Pool

Tennis

Vehicle
TrailsSnooker
(8 Ball Pool Table)

Whoever said that guests only had to rest and remain calm while experiencing one of our country's most impressive natural landscapes? Numerous activity options await, all bent on making your stay at Golden Gate Highlands National Park as memorable and charming as possible:

- Ribbok Hiking Trail (2 days and 1 night): maximum of 18 persons per group. Advance booking is essential. Hikers must provide own necessities and are to enquire at the reservations office.
- Short nature trails (varying from 1 hour to 5 hours): no bookings required.
- Viewing of area's splendid game assortment at leisure in own vehicle.
- Holiday programmes are conducted during the April and December holidays. Enquire at reception.
- Environmental education courses (varying from 1 to 5 days).
- Bowls, tennis, table tennis and snooker (at the hotel).
- Experience nature on horseback – booking is essential.
- Abseiling and canoeing available for people using Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre.

These activities will ensure an exciting eco-tourism experience. All bookings as well as further details for these activities are available from reception.



Get Married on Honeymoon

What if you could take the beautiful and soothing surroundings of your honeymoon, that peaceful and calming feeling of eternal bliss and happiness, and have it fill out your entire wedding day as well?

Now you can get married and have your honeymoon in paradise, having it all play off in one the most striking natural settings under the African sun. Imagine saying "I do" to your loved one, surrounded by the many indescribable shades of orange/red as golden rays cast their hues over the distant horizon, mirrored against the majestic sandstone cliffs that surround your wedding venue.

Begin your new life together, along with your new love, your new family and your new friends, in a place that is filled with just the right amount of beauty, tranquillity and splendour to serve as both a wedding chapel and honeymoon suite.



Golden Gate Highlands National Park has played host to many weddings (and many christenings!) over the years. With unique surroundings, serene settings, superb facilities and enthusiastically helpful staff, a memorable and superbly gorgeous day is guaranteed. With a variety of accommodation facilities to choose from, ranging from basic to luxury, you are simply spoiled for choice! And to kick-off the honeymoon on a wild note, a special room can be made up just for you and your love.

Having then taken the first step into your new life together, you can relax in the natural sounds of Golden Gate's landscapes, flowing water or echo of the bushes, as the different sounds of nature make your biggest day your most beautiful ...

General Information

Climate

Mild highveld summers with the possibility of thunderstorms in the afternoon and cold winters, with occasional snow, transforming the park into a white wonderland.

Day Visitors

With a public road running through the park, day visitors are welcome to drive through the park. Day visitors are requested to check-in at Glen Reenen Rest Camp reception so that their day trip to the park can be recorded.

Tariffs

All tariffs are available from reception or on our website: www.sanparks.org

Handy Hints

Remember to bring a hat, walking shoes, sun block, camera, binoculars and wildlife reference books. Hikers on day and overnight trails must always carry sufficient water. Take cool and light clothing for summer and warm clothing for winter. The area is prone to sudden weather changes.

Travel / How to Get there

- Equidistant from Johannesburg, Durban and Bloemfontein.
- Easily accessible via excellent tarred road (not all park roads are tarred)
- Public road runs through the park (R712).

Areas of Special Interest

- The impressive Brandwag Buttress rock formation.
- Vulture Restaurant (not for the sensitive & children).
- Cathedral Cave (guided walk).
- Zuluhoek Lookout Point.
- Generaalskop Viewpoint.
- Oribi Basin.
- Drakensberg View.
- The van Reenen family graveyard.

Fauna and Flora

Game

The wildlife that roam the open plains and mountain slopes of Golden Gate include a variety of mammals such as black wildebeest, eland, blesbok, oribi, springbok, Burchell's zebra etc.

Birding

Guests staring in awe at the majestic mountains of the Free State will no doubt catch a glimpse of the Bearded Vulture, as it is the bird everyone associates with in this area. An impressive variety of birds can be seen soaring around the crags of Golden Gate including Black Stork, Bald Ibis, Cape Vulture and others. Black and Alpine Swift are also common airborne species.

Guests intent on breaking out their birding books and doing some serious searching can spot Golden Gate specials such as Grey-wing and Redwing Francolin, Mountain, Mocking Cliff- and Buff-streaked Chat, Sentinel and Cape Rock-Thrush, Orange-breasted Rockjumper, African Rock Pipit, Ground Woodpecker, Wing-snapping (Ayre's), Wailing and Lazy Cisticola, Gurney's Sugarbird, Malachite, Greater Double-collared and Southern (Lesser) Double-collared Sunbird and Drakenberg Siskin.

Vegetation

Golden Gate's lush vegetation landscapes can be divided into grasslands and woodland/forest. The Afromontane forest grows in the sheltered ravines and gorges where the necessary moisture level is maintained and is protected from unfavourable weather conditions, as well as fire. *Leucosidea sericea* (ouhout) woodland can be found in the park's valleys and some south-eastern slopes. Isolated patches of Protea woodland (*Protea caffra*, *P. roupelliae* and *P. subvestita*) also occur. Golden Gate offers numerous opportunities for guests to partake in hiking trips and experience the gorgeous settings of the natural environment. Hiking through the park will allow you to see stands of trees of which the flaking bark and silky-haired leaves are characteristic. These trees are called Oldwood (*Ouhout*), *Leucosidea sericea*, because of the 'old' appearance of the twisted trunks of the full-grown trees and because the wood burns like old, rotten wood. This is the most common tree to be found in Golden Gate and belongs to the rose family (*Rosaceae*). It is quite interesting to note that about 117 species of beetles belonging to 35 different families are associated with the Oldwood trees in the park.

Warnings

Please ensure that your stay is happy and safe by taking note of a few simple warnings. You will be sharing your stay with many exciting and unusual creatures but without knowledge some of them could be dangerous!



Beware
Bats



Beware
Spiders



Beware
Snakes



Beware
Scorpions



Beware
Wasps



Beware
Bees

If you must walk around at night please **DO NOT DO SO WITHOUT A TORCH.**

REMEMBER BY FEEDING ANY WILDLIFE YOU ARE SIGNING THEIR DEATH WARRANT, AS THEY BECOME AGGRESSIVE.

General Rules

40

Gravel
Roads

50

Tarred
Roads



Declare
Firearm
at Gate



Feeding the
Game is
Prohibited



Fire Free
Zone



Hanging Out
of Vehicle is
Prohibited



Poaching
is
Prohibited



Pet Free
Zone



Removing
Flora is
Prohibited



Stay on
Marked Trails



Stay in your
Vehicle



Smoking
Free Zone



Touching the
Game is
Prohibited



Litter Free
Zone



Noise Free
Zone



Failure to observe these simple
rules is a criminal offense

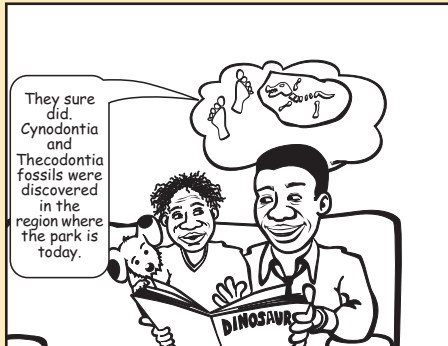
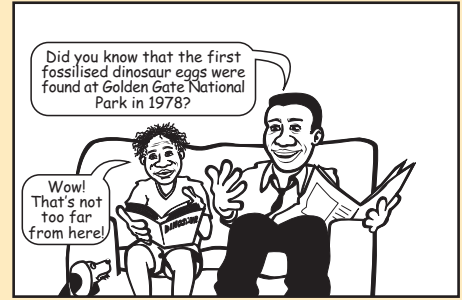
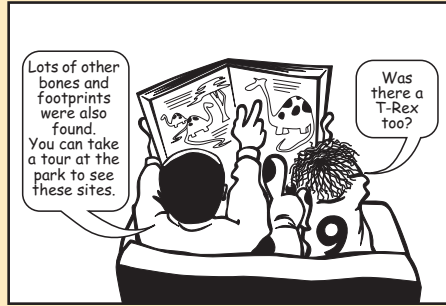




MELUSI AND MILO The Dinosaurs of Golden Gate

Melusi and his dog Milo (SANParks unofficial envoys of conservation and biodiversity) are always keen to teach about the importance of nature.

Melusi learns about the Dinosaurs and their existence in South Africa many years ago.





South African
NATIONAL PARKS

**GOLDEN GATE HIGHLANDS
NATIONAL PARK**



Golden Gate

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A Golden Promise

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E-mail: traveltrade@sanparks.org

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